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ABSTRACT

A practicum was developed which implemented an alternative to using a standard reading textbook, by using the newspaper as a learning tool to supplement the existing reading program over a 12-week period in a first grade class. The program centered around a collection of techniques and strategies used to motivate and increase young children's reading skills. The goal was to increase the frequency of independent reading (and thus motivation), to increase vocabulary development, and to increase the critical thinking skills of first-grade students. Students engaged in daily structured newspaper activities over a 12-week period. At the conclusion of the program the frequency of independent reading, vocabulary, motivation, and thinking skills was significantly increased. Evaluation devices such as tests, surveys, logs, and journals showed positive results and significant gains. (Three tables of data are included; 5 appendixes--containing a reading survey of students, lists of students' pre- and post-implementation reading levels, a newspaper survey of students, and tallies of target group responses over a 12-week period--and 18 references are attached.) (Author/PRA)

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IMPROVING READING SKILLS AND MOTIVATING FIRST GRADE CHILDREN THROUGH THE USE OF THE NEWSPAPER

By

Sarah Janane Meyer

A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education, Nova University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

The abstract of this report may be placed in a National Database System for reference.

July/1990

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Abstract

Improving Reading Skills and Motivating First Grade Children Through Using The Newspaper
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The Center for the Advancement of Education.
Descriptors: Primary Education/ Grade 1/ Reading Improvement/ Reading/ Listening/ Writing/ Vocabulary/ Newspapers/ Skills Development/ Communication Skills/ Daily Living Skills/ Reading Readiness/ Motivation/ Student Motivation/ Motivation Techniques/ Recreational Reading/ Decoding/ Reading-Writing Relationship/ Learning Motivation/ Student Interests/ Whole Language/ Teaching Using the Newspaper/ Newspapers in Education/ News Media/ Integrated Activities/

The author developed and implemented an alternative to using the standard reading textbook. The newspaper was used as a learning tool to supplement the existing reading program used in the first grade class. This program centered on a collection of techniques and strategies used to motivate and increase young children's reading skills. The goal was to increase the frequency of independent reading, showing an increase in motivation, increase vocabulary development, and increase the critical thinking skills of first grade students.

Students engaged in daily structured newspaper activities over a twelve-week period. At the conclusion of the program, the frequency of independent reading, increased vocabulary, motivation, and thinking skills were significantly increased. Evaluation devices (tests, surveys, logs, and journals) showed positive results and significant gains. The author noted that 88 percent of the target group increased reading skills by one level and 100 percent of the target group demonstrated a more positive, motivated attitude toward reading. After this 12 week implementation period the author also noted that 88 percent of the target group increased their verbal responses and critical thinking skills.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

S. Janane Meyer

S. Janane Meyer

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CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE

Background

The author was a first grade teacher at an elementary school that was opened during the 1973-74 school year. The school's population has steadily grown, increasing to nearly 1,200 students by the 1989-90 school year. This continual population increase was due to the inclusion of the Chapter I Migrant Center for all county migrant students on the school facility in 1982-83; district rezoning in 1983-84; and continued growth in population in the school zone through the 1989-90 school year. Rezoning occurred once again for the 1990-91 school year. The school now has a reduction in student population, due to students' moving to two new elementary schools. With the building of the two new elementary schools, the migrant programs were transferred out of this school during the 90-91 school year. In addition, the School Board is implementing a Pre-kindergarten program at the school for special needs children. All these factors contribute to the change in school population for the 1990-91 school year, reducing it from nearly 1,200 students in 1989-90 to approximately 660 students.

During 1990-91, this elementary school housed exceptional student education classrooms for students in grades kindergarten through five. Physical education, art, and music classrooms have been provided to grades kindergarten through five since 1987-88, when all-day kindergarten classes first became a reality. Guidance and pyschological services are available to the entire school population.

During the 1987-88 school year a new addition was built on to the school and it not only held basic classrooms, but was designed with a most functional art room and four exceptional student education classrooms. But the school continued to grow and in spite of the new addition, portables became a part of the grounds plan. During 1989-90, it became necessary to house seventeen portables on the grounds: eight third grades, two bilingual classrooms, three first grades, three kindergartens, and one art classroom. During 1990-91, with the enrollment decrease, only seven portables existexpected growth) or to accomodate new growth during this year.

There were five self-contained kindergarten classes involved solely in whole language instruction. Planning was done cooperatively as a team and consistency prevailed throughout these five rooms. The primary level includes self-contained first grades, five self-contained second grades, and five self-contained third grades. Whole language instruction prevails

throughout all three grades, being the newest in the third grade, where this was the first year of implementation. The author taught a self-contained whole language first grade class at this school. The whole language philosophy is an integrated approach to reaching all subjects through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking--providing a wider, more challenging and individualized approach to learning. The fourth and fifth grades contained four classrooms each, were self-contained, and implemented an integrated curriculum.

The parents and community continue to be well-informed and involved through school publications, a strong Parent Teacher Organization, an active in-house volunteer organization, and the School Advisory Committee. From 1988 to the present, school coffees have been held in private homes to solicit concerns from parents and to gain helpful insights into ways the school can improve. These also serve as a form of networking from parent to parent, and between parents and school officials. This allows communication after school hours for individuals unable to become involved during working hours. During 1989-90, this school also achieved the title of Red Carpet School, as part of the state's effort to promote and involve parents and community at large in the working of the school.

The Florida Performance Measurement System is used as an evaluation tool by the principal and

provides continuity throughout the school and provides a specific method for handling inappropriate behavior, allowing maximum learning to occur in the educational setting. A positive approach for each child is continually emphasized through such schoolwide programs as Student of the Week, DUSO-Guidance Program, academic pep rallies, Math Superstars, Great Books, Super Lunch Program, the Ambassadors Club, and the Helping Hands program that encourages children to lend a helping hand at home, hoping that this attitude will carry over to school and into all facets of the child's life. A most positive after-school enrichment program began at this school during the 1987-88 school year and has continued to grow. This successful program operates in conjunction with the Adult and Community Education Services, and offers children a wide variety of courses to participate in after school. These include but are not limited to: Spanish, art, calligraphy, conservancy, computers, aerobics, media, and even etiquette.

The general social and economic climate of the community exerts a profound influence on the school and its programs. This climate helps to determine needs, to provide a focus, and to enhance or limit the school's potential. Listed below are nonschool programs and/or facilities that are available to and used by the community and elementary pupils:

1. Library Facilities

The public library offers an extensive program to elementary school children. The public library has five branches and a traveling bookmobile. It offers a comprehensive summer reading program, films, and a mail-a-book program for shut-ins. The library lends art prints and cassettes and maintains an inter-library loan program throuh the state library, that offers microfilm and other archival material. It also lends films to individual schools and churches. A separate children's library is maintained in the downtown center that is extensively used by elementary school children after school and on week-ends and summers.

2. Recreational Opportunities and Facilities

The community offers a myriad of recreation opportunities and facilities, such as bowling, tennis, golf, swimming, fishing, boating, beach, bike paths, and racquetball. Some of the organized recreation programs offered are: football, boys and girls softball, soccer, swim teams, running clubs, little league, and T-ball. There are two recreational facilities that are open year round.

3. Performing Arts Organization and Programs

There are several organization devoted to the arts that offer programs for elementary school children. Performances are held at elementary school by the high school drama department and by several privately run agencies. The county

recreational department offers modeling, dance, and baton and twirling classes.

4. Churches

All major faiths are serviced by numerous churches in the area. Many of these churches provide programs specifically for young people.

5. Museums, art galleries, a science center, planeteriums, zoos, and other cultural centers are located in the county.

6. Others

An educational channel from Miami, mall shows, Swamp Buggy Races, and a county fair.

School facilities are also available for use by community organizations upon request. Some schools are regularly used for adult education courses held throughout the school year. As stated, this county has much to offer the children and as teachers, one is competing with the variety of these activities. A survey done by the author shows that teachers and parents are concerned about motivating the students to read.

The Problem

A parent survey, a teacher survey, and a student survey were done by the author. The parent pre-survey showed the following results:

TABLE I

Parent Pre-Survey

Opinions about school	percent of parents in agreement
-school provides for the individual differences of the children	71
-adequate materials are provided for students to learn basic reading skills	92
-adequate materials/books are sent home for parents to help students in daily work	68
-children enjoy school	70

The teacher pre-survey showed the following teacher results:

TABLE II

Teacher Pre-Survey

Opinions about school	percent of teachers in agreement
-school provides for the individual differences of the child	78
-adequate materials are available to students to learn basic reading skills	70
-adequate materials/books are sent home for parents to help students in daily work	89
-children enjoy school	78

While 92 percent of parents felt that students had adequate materials for learning basic reading skills, only 70 percent of the teachers felt that the students had adequate materials. Also, 68

percent of the parents felt that adequate materials/books were sent home in order to help students, but 92 percent of the teachers felt that there were adequate materials sent home.

The third survey done by the author was to the individual students of a first grade class.(Appendix A:35) The results divided the class into two groups. One group did not enjoy reading and did not consider themselves good readers. This group did not have much to say during the interview. The other group did enjoy reading and felt that they were good readers This group also understood the importance of reading. Also a meeting was held for all first grade teachers to find their views on the most important needs in reading (Long, Peterson, Riccardi, 1990). The teachers identified the child's motivation to independently read, vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking skills as important reading needs. The first grade teachers identified motivation as the most critical need for students who are having difficulty with reading. There is a need for a method to use materials or a tool that can be utilized in the classroom to teach basic reading skills and motivate the individual child in first grade. This tool will also need to be flexible so it can be used at home in the same manner.

The author's remedial reading students served as the target group. This group was 33 percent of the class.(Appendix B:36) The ideal class should

consist of no more than eight percent reading at the remedial level. The motivation of the remedial group as noted by author's observations was lower than the developmental reading group. This was also demonstrated in the student reading pre-survey where the target group did not express comments and were not able to complete the survey. The target group should have shown a greater interest in reading. The author expected the target group to improve their reading skills to the developmental level. It was expected that their interest in reading would increase as they improved. The author also noticed that the students in the target group were not responding properly to questions asked during reading group time. The students in the target group were answering questions with short answers during discussions in the reading group. The author noted these responses through a tally kept each time the students in the target group answered with a short or one-word response. As indicated by Barell(1985) and Presseisen(1985) elementary students should be able to use creative thinking skills to respond in reading discussions. Both Barell and Presseisen remark that elementary students should be using creative thinking skills to answer with longer, more complex responses during their reading group time.

Outcome Objectives

Reading instruction using the newspaper was planned for the first grade class. The goals and objectives are stated as follows:

1. After 12 weeks of utilizing the newspaper for reading instruction, 100 percent of the target group should have increased reading skills as demonstrated by an increase of one reading level and measured by mastery of reading level samples from a basal text.
2. After 12 weeks of utilizing the newspaper for reading instruction, 100 percent of the target group would demonstrate a more positive, motivated attitude toward reading as evidenced by teacher observations, parent reports of homework, student newspaper post-surveys, and individual reading surveys.
3. After 12 weeks of utilizing the newspaper for reading instruction, 100 percent of the target group should have increased their verbal responses 50 percent as measured by a tally kept by the author.
4. After 12 weeks of utilizing the newspaper for reading instructions, 100 percent of the first grade students would increase their critical thinking skills by 100 percent as measured by the comparison of the child's individual reading pre-survey/post-survey responses.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH AND SOLUTION STRATEGY

Reading difficulty and the lack of reading was not a problem peculiar to our school. Articles this author has read, observations, and interviews with other teachers and parents confirmed that the student having difficulty with reading and the lack of interest in reading was a concern to all. Anderson(1985) noted that reading requires many skills and reading is not skills alone but understanding the text read. Anderson stated that reading was the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information. Anderson also stated that reading is a holistic act. Anderson felt that while reading can be analyzed into subskills, such as discriminating letters and identifying words, performing the subskills one at a time does not constitute reading. Success in reading requires five things from a reader: learning to reason about written material using knowledge from everyday life; mastering basic processes to the point that they are automatic, so that the child can understand the meaning; learning to control one's reading in relation to one's purpose, the nature of the material and whether one is comprehending; learning to sustain attention and learning that

written materials can be interesting and informative; and realizing that reading is a lifelong pursuit.(Anderson, 1985) The writer wrote about the basal reading program. The program was a complete package of teaching materials consisting of teacher's manual, children's reading books and workbooks. The program involved teaching word recognition, phonics, and sight words. The program also stressed discussions before reading and discussions and questioning after reading. This is done to motivate and encourage the children to think at a higher level. The writer also stated that both the quantity and quality of instruction for low groups needed improvement. Some of the problems with ability grouping could be alleviated by switching group assignments periodically.

Gillespie(1989) also agreed with Anderson that the basal reading program was very successful in teaching children to read. Although Gillespie agreed with the basal reading program, she also felt that this program could and would benefit from incorporating the use of the newspaper. Within the basal reading program, Gillespie noted that a great deal can be taught using the newpaper because this medium contains a variety of information in a number of different formats. Gillespie stated that a good reading program would utilize the variety of material from the newspaper and incorporate it into a daily use guided by the

basal reading program methods and skills. Cooter and Flynt(1989) are writers who also described a reading program that integrates holisitc and direct instructional ideas by using the basal reader as one part of a literary program.

Sobol and Sobol(1987) suggested that a good reader must develop word recognition skills, word attack skills, configuration clues, picture clues, context clues, phonics analysis, and structural analysis. The writers stated several ways of teaching first graders how to become good readers. Children can learn by using the basal program, individual reading programs, language-experience programs or diagnostic/prescriptive approach. Sobol and Sobol also stressed the importance of providing the children with learning opportunities suited to their reading levels, developmental levels, interests, skills needs, and individual learning styles. Routman(1988) strongly agreed with Sobol and Sobol to the point that he researched and gave encouragement and ideas to teachers wanting to change from skill-oriented basal text to literature-based whole language programs. Dianna(1984) is also another writer who agreed with the Sobols. Dianna noted the value of using children's books to enhance career education. Dianna presents sample learning activities for use in presenting career education concepts through children's literature.

Kantrowitz(1990) interviewed a first grade teacher who shared excitement and enthusiasm about teaching with the whole language approach. The teacher uses children's books to teach. The books are chosen by the children according to their interest. When a book was chosen, the teacher then taught around that subject, incorporating skills whenever appropriate.

This report stated that in a recent report, Adams, author of "Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print," stated that many children who are read to regularly will probably do well without direct instruction in phonics, because they have already learned word sounds and the alphabet by listening and watching. But other children need help in learning to recognize the relationships between symbol and meaning. Adams estimates that 25 percent of middle-class children and an even higher percentage of poor youngsters enter school without any knowledge of the rudiments of reading. Those children need phonics instruction.

Research done by DeRoche and Skover(1983) showed five positive outcomes from using newspapers in classrooms. In summary, they were:

1. Newspaper use seemed to influence verbal interactions, student motivation, school attendance, and student behavior.
2. Using newspapers regularly improved reading interest and habits of learners.
3. Newspapers were a useful instructional tool.

4. Newspaper use was extremely helpful in teaching reading skills.
5. Newspaper use helped to teach reading and motivated the students; but most of all, itincreased their interest and knowledge of world affairs.

As indicated by Barell(1985) and Presseisen (1985), elementary students should be able to use creative thinking skills to respond in reading discussions. Both Barell and Presseisen remark that elementary students should be using creative thinking skills to answer with longer, more complex responses during their reading group time. Fitzgerald(1988) agreed with using the newspaper in the classroom but also stated that the newspaper was a great way to get the parents involved in the child's work at home. The reason Fitzgerald felt so strongly about using the newspaper is that the newspaper is in many homes already, the newspaper is easily accessible, and it is something all families can use every day. Stein(1988) noted that the newspaper can be used not only for reading and homework but also to teach math, social studies, science, history, drama, economics and language arts. Stein reported on a newspaper program developed by a selected newspaper as a teaching tool for 26 weeks. According to the survey, Stein noted that 85 percent of the teachers rated the newspaper as a valuable teaching tool. Ninety-four percent

stated that using the newspaper increased the students' knowledge of the world. Stein also noted that the program increased the students' reading skills, critical thinking skills, and motivation and interest in reading. Gersch (1988) also reported on a selected school that put all books aside on one day out of the year. The whole school used newspapers to conduct class. The teachers reported that the class and teacher had a fun day. The teachers reported that students were immersed in work all day and asked for homework at the end of the day.

That is why the author chose to use newspapers in the first grade classroom in the belief that newspapers would improve reading skills, and would help motivate the students to read. The goal was to help children to become fluent readers and to increase their interest in reading. After reviewing the research and reading about the different ways reading was being taught in the classroom, the author was convinced that in order to teach a child, the child must first be interested. Motivation was the key to a good reader. In general, individuals do not learn unless they experience some urge or motivation to do so. Youngsters do best with materials that matter to them and are relevant to their everyday lives. Newspapers, then, are real-life referents for teaching what otherwise might be abstract concepts. Newspapers are fresh, up-to-date and practical. They can help bridge the gap between

the textbook and the real world. Most textbooks cannot take individual differences into account. But newspapers contain information written at a variety of reading levels, so every child can work at their own pace. Newspapers also provide students with many opportunities to practice what they have learned in the classroom.

An extensive study to determine the effectiveness of newspaper use in the upper grade classrooms was conducted in several major cities.(Media General Research, 1981) The survey revealed that changes in media habits were positively affected by the newspaper program with significant improvement reported in the interest in reading of newspapers. Wilson(1986) likewise was involved in a similar newspaper program involving upper-grade students in the classroom. Wilson also noted that the newspaper program confirmed the value of the newspaper in the classroom. Teachers stated that reading skills and participation had increased since using the newspaper in classroom.

The newspaper in the upper grade classrooms had improved and increased reading skills, reading comprehension, vocabulary, math skills and most of all student motivation. The author chose to research using the newspaper in the classroom because of these studies done in the upper grade classes. The lower grade teachers were having the same problems with reading skills, motivation, and

critical thinking skills among their students as the upper grade teachers.

The author chose to research and implement a reading program using the newspaper to increase reading skills, motivate the students to read, and increase critical thinking skills of the first grade students. After reviewing the research on increasing reading skills of first grade students, surveying teachers, parents, and students, and considering the pros and cons of the school's monies, materials, equipment resources, and time, the author suggested that using the newspaper was the best way to increase the students' reading skills, critical thinking skills, and to help motivate the students to read.

The author surveyed the students in the author's first grade class then utilized the newspaper on a daily basis for a period of 12 weeks, in order to improve reading skills, increase critical thinking skills and to motivate the students to read. The author then re-surveyed the same students to evaluate if the newspaper increased the students' reading skills, critical thinking skills or motivated the students to read.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The author used the newspaper to improve reading skills and to motivate the author's first grade class to read. The author pre-surveyed (Appendices A:35 and C:40), observed, used newspapers in class, and then post-surveyed (Appendices A:35 and C:40) all the students to show an increase in skills and motivation. The newspaper was used throughout the day for many activities, projects, and practice. The author proved that using the newspaper daily in class increased reading scores of the low-achievers and low self-esteemed students 88 percent in 12 weeks.

Week 1:

The author pre-surveyed all the students in the author's class, observed the students during reading time and whole group time, and kept a running tally of students who answered in short or one-word answers.

Week 2:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to accomplish activities throughout the day. Skills taught from the newspaper were:

-left to right visual training
-following directions
-initial sound recognition
-vowel patterns
-vowels/consonants
-letter discrimination

Week 3:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-alphabetizing
-table of contents
-punctuation
-rhyming

Week 4:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-classifying
-capitalization
-similarities/differences
-character feelings

Week 5:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-abbreviations
-sentence patterns
-contractions
-diagraphs

Week 6:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-creative thinking (on going)
-map reading
-word recognition
-phonics
-blends
-vocabulary (on going)
-compound words

Midpoint: Evaluations were conducted. These consisted of tallies taken by the author and

compared to the previous tallies. No changes were needed at this time.

Week 7:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-memory reinforcement
-sequencing
-comprehension skills
-graphs/tables
-synonyms/antonyms/homonyms

Week 8:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-chronological order
-main ideas
-fact/opinion
-fact/fiction
-ordering

Evaluations were conducted. These consisted of tallies taken by the author and compared to the previous tallies. No changes were needed at this time.

Week 9:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-spelling
-summarizing
-relating past/present
-concluding

Week 10:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-evaluation
-computation
-writing
-context clues

Evaluations were conducted. These consisted of tallies taken by the author and compared to the previous tallies. No changes were needed at this time.

Week 11:

The author used the newspaper in the classroom to teach the following skills:

-predicting outcomes
-cause/effect
-problem solving

Some examples of activities done during these ten weeks were:

1. Scrapbook project--Each student had their own newspaper. The students familiarized themselves with the sections of the newspaper by pasting the following items in a student-made scrapbook:

-the name of the newspaper
-the index
-headlines from the front page
-a news photo
-a large ad
-birth and death notices
-an editorial
-a comic strip
-a sports photo
-a weather map

The teacher asked pupils to label each item, copying words from a list on the chalkboard.

2. Scavenger hunt--Students found all these items in the newspaper, cut them out and pasted them on a piece of paper:

-a face with glasses
-the smallest and largest ads
-ten Florida towns
-something to play with
-a vehicle other than a car
-a letter from someone
-an animal
-a movie that starts between 7 and 8 o'clock
-the most expensive car for sale in the want ads
-a game
-an angry word

3. Long vowel books--Students found long a words, and then marked and pasted them on a long a page of a student-made book. Each vowel had a separate page and was done in the same manner.

4. Each student listened to the teacher read the information describing a picture and then told the who, what, when, where, why and how.

5. The students imagined that they were the main character in a news story. After reading the published account, students told their own side of the story.

At weeks six, eight, and ten, program evaluations were conducted. Tallies were taken and compared to the previous tallies. The objectives were being met or at least some gains were being observed each time the tallies were taken, so the newspaper program was continued. But if at these checkpoint times the author had observed no gains nor increases in reading skills

or student motivation, the author would have needed to re-evaluate the problem and objectives.

Week 12:

The author post-surveyed the students and compared the tallies. The author surveyed the parents again and compared the two surveys.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

After 12 weeks of implementation, the author evaluated the results of the program. The author re-evaluated the students in the target group to measure their reading level. The author surveyed the parents and students again with the same instruments used in the pre-surveys. The author compared the results. The author gave a post-reading survey to the students in the target group and compared the two. The author also compared all tallies to find if there was a decrease in short or one-word answers from the target group.

The first objective would be met if 100 percent of the target group increased skills by one reading level. The second objective would be met if 100 percent of the target group demonstrated a more positive, motivated attitude toward reading. The third objective would be met if 100 percent of the target group increased verbal responses 50 percent. The fourth objective would be met if 100 percent of the first grade class increased critical thinking skills by 100 percent, as measured by the comparison of the child's individual reading pre-survey/post-survey responses.

The author found that the results were positive. After 12 weeks of implementation of the

newspaper program the author got positive results from parents, other teachers, and most importantly from the author's students.

The author re-evaluated the students in the target group, along with the rest of the class, to measure their reading levels. (Appendix B:38 and D:42). This evaluation was measured by teacher observation and mastery of reading level samples from a basal text. As indicated by the chart (Appendix B:38 and D:42) all of the students in the target group except for one student increased their reading level to the developmental level. The one student not meeting the objectives was classified SLD and taken out of the classroom for one hour daily. The developmental readers are students who were working at grade level. The author also showed that through using the newspaper that the other students also increased their reading level. The author's class had four students who moved from the developmental level to the enriched level during the newspaper implementaion period. The author's first objective was not met with 100 percent increase of skills by one reading level, but by 88 percent due to the inclusion of the SLD student.

The next step the author took was to re-survey the parents and students with the same surveys used at the beginning of the 12 week implementation. The parents' responses showed that there had been some positive changes made.

The tables below show parents responses before and after the newspaper implementation.

TABLE I

Parent Pre-Survey

Opinions about school	percent of parents in agreement
-school provides for the individual differences of the children	71
-adequate materials are provided for students to learn basic reading skills	92
-adequate materials/books are sent home for parents to help students in daily work	68
-children enjoy school	70

TABLE III

Parent Post-Survey

Opinions about school	percent of parents in agreement
-school provides for the individual differences of the children	88
-adequate materials are provided for students to learn basic reading skills	93
-adequate materials/books are sent home for parents to help students in daily work	91
-children enjoy school	98

The increase of the percent of parents in agreement proved to the author that the parents felt confident with the use of newspapers to increase the students' interest, motivation, and

attitude toward reading. The author then re-surveyed the students using the same Student Reading Survey (Appendix A:35). The author then compared the students' responses before and after the newpaper implementation and found that 100 percent of all the author's students stated that they enjoyed reading, felt confident about their reading, and enjoyed reading a wide variety of books. This survey, along with the parent survey, proved to the author that the second objective had been met. One hundred percent of the target had demonstrated a more positive, motivated attitude toward reading.

The author's third and fourth objectives were proven by teacher observation, student reading survey (Appendix A:35) and a tally (Appendix E:44) that was kept by the author. The author observed the target group and kept a tally for every response the student made during group discussions. At that time the author noted not much of an increase in verbal responses which indicated to the author that the target group was also not increasing their ciritical thinking skills. The author continued to keep a tally of the target group's responses. By week eight of implementation the author noted a significant increase in the students' verbal responses which indicated to the author that the students were also increasing their critical thinking skills. The author's target group by the eighth week were responding to questions with complete thoughts and

this target group was also asking more in-depth questions during group discussions. As the tallies (Appendix E:44) show, by week twelve all but the SLD student in the target group had increased their verbal responses and critical thinking skills by 100 percent.

The last evaluation that the author conducted was to give the author's students the newspaper post-survey (Appendix C:40). After comparing the pre-survey to the post-survey, the author noted that the students had increased their knowledge of the layout of a newspaper, their knowledge of what to believe and what not to believe in articles throughout the newspaper and most of all the author noted an increase in students' interest in reading and utilizing the newsppaer.

After the 12 weeks of implementation the author noted that the use of the newspaper in the classroom was very beneficial to students, parents, and teachers. Using the newspaper in the clssroom was very practical. The newspaper publishes a daily updated text, it's a text that each child can find something of their own interest to read about. The newspaper is a collection of current events that allows the student to understand or follow what is happening in their world. The newspaper is a text that the students enjoyed using and it can be used for any topic, subject or skill being taught at any level. The parents enjoyed using the newspaper at home because it is a text that they

can also relate to in their world. The parents were not intimidated nor confused when the students brought home an assignment using the newspaper.

CHAPTER VII

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since using the newspaper in the classroom helped a majority of the students, the author recommends that the newsppaer be used in addition to other reading materials in the classroom. The newspaper activities that this author used in the classroom could be easily implemented by other teachers. Indeed, the author's co-workers have already asked to be inserviced next year on how to use the newspaper in their classrooms.

The author plans to use the program next year, keeping these thoughts in mind. Using the newspaper was an excellent way of teaching skills and motivating children but it must be incorporated with other reading materials. The newspaper should not be a stand-alone reading text in the classroom.

The author will also be sharing the results with the Newwspaper in Education (NIE) group located in Jacksonville, Florida.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Student Reading Survey

APPENDIX A

STUDENT READING SURVEY

Child's Name_____Age____Grade____

Date_____School_____

1. Do you like to read? Yes___ No___

   Yes - Why do you like to read?

   No - Why don't you like to read?

2. Are you a good reader? Yes___ No___

3. Yes - Why do you think so?

   No - With what parts of reading are you having trouble?

4. What do you do when you come to a word you do not know?

   Do you do anything else?

5. What do you do when you do not understand what you have read?

6. Are there some things about reading that you enjoy? What are they?

7. Are there some things about reading that you don't like? What are they?

8. What is the best story or book you have ever read?

9. What would you like to learn to make you a better reader?

10. What is reading?

11. Can you read without a book?

12. Why do people read?

Why do you read?

Appendix B

Pre-Implementation
Reading Levels

APPENDIX B

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION
READING LEVELS
DECEMBER 1990

Code for reading levels:

R = remedial
D = developmental
E = enrichment

student number	reading level
1	D
2	D
3	D
4	D
5	R
6	R
7	E
8	R
9	D
10	D
11	D
12	R
13	R
14	R
15	E
16	D
17	R
18	D
19	D
20	R
21	D
22	D
23	D
24	D
25	D

TOTALS

Enriched - 2 Developmental - 15 Remedial - 8

*remedial group is target group

Appendix C

Newspaper Pre-Survey/Post-Survey

APPENDIX C

NEWSPAPER PRE-SURVEY/POST-SURVEY

1. Does your family get a daily newspaper?_____
   If so, what is its name?_____

2. Which parts of the newspaper do you like?

___advice columns
___business news
___comics
___department store ads
___crossword puzzles
___death notices
___editorials
___movie ads
___pictures
___sports news
___TV news
___weather news
___fashion news
___front page
___food ads
___horoscopes
___local news
___letter to the editor
___want ads
___wedding news

3. Do you look through the entire newspaper, front to back?_____

4. How much of the newspaper do you believe?

___all of it
___most of it
___some of it
___none of it

5. Where do you get most of your information about current events?_____

6. Are all newspapers alike? Explain._____
_____

7. What are the names of the newspapers in your town?_____

Appendix D

Post-Implementation Reading Levels

APPENDIX D

POST-IMPLEMENTATION
READING LEVELS
JUNE 1991

Code for reading levels:

R = remedial
D = developmental
E = enrichment

student number	reading level
1	D
2	D
3	E
4	D
5	D
6	D
7	E
8	R
9	D
10	D
11	D
12	D
13	D
14	D
15	E
16	D
17	D
18	E
19	D
20	D
21	D
22	D
23	D
24	E
25	E

TOTALS

Enriched - 6 Developmental - 18 Remedial - 1

*target group consisted of students
5,6,8,12,13,14,17,20

Appendix E

Tallies of Target Group Responses
Over a 12 Week Period

APPENDIX E

TALLIES OF TARGET GROUP RESPONSES
OVER A 12 WEEK PERIOD